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Predeployment Adaptation Questionnaire Recruiting and Data Analyses

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W7711-017712/001/TOR

On behalf of
Defence R&D Canada

Defence Research and Development Canada - Toronto

Contract Report

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Abstract

This report summarizes the work completed in contract # W7711-017712/001/TOR. The purpose of this contract was to continue collecting data using the Predeployment Adaptation Questionnaire (PAQ) respondents, scan PAQ data using Teleform software, develop and manage a database, conduct data analyses of the predeployment questionnaire data, prepare the Deployment Questionnaire using Teleform software, pretest the Deployment Questionnaire, and provide selected statistical assistance to PSTC.

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Résumé

Ce rapport récapitule le travail accompli lors du contrat n° W7711-017712/001/TOR. Le mandat de ce contrat était de poursuivre la collecte des données auprès de répondants du questionnaire sur l'adaptation au prédéploiement (PAQ), de numériser les données PAQ avec le logiciel Teleform, de développer et de gérer une base de données, d'analyser les données tirées du questionnaire sur le prédéploiement, de produire un questionnaire sur le déploiement au moyen du logiciel Teleform, d'effectuer un prétest du questionnaire sur le déploiement et de réaliser des analyses à partir des questionnaires existants du CFSP (questionnaires spéciaux, critique de cours et de validation).

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Executive summary

Knowledge of two specialized software programs, Teleform and SPSS, was required for the work completed under this contract. Teleform was primarily used to scan completed questionnaires into the computer and to export data to SPSS for analyses.

The method of recruiting Predeployment Adaptation Questionnaire (PAQ) respondents was modified slightly under this contract. Rather than organizing and supervising questionnaire completion sessions, the research assistant now attends Peacekeeping Support Training Center (PSTC) classes to inform students about the study and pass out questionnaires to interested students. Respondents can contact the research assistant via email with questions that arise during their participation; on completion of the questionnaire they deposit it into a locked box located in the PSTC.

The database now includes 441 respondents. Data were cleaned before reliability analyses were conducted, the results of which are reported in the DRDC Technical Report No. TR 2002-190 entitled, "Peace Support Operations Predeployment Survey: Scales Reliability Analyses."

The mailing list of potential deployment questionnaire respondents from information on PAQ reply cards has been updated. It is maintained as an Access 2000 database. The deployment questionnaire was created using Teleform. However, as of the end of the contract, problems were still being experienced in formatting the questionnaire in a manner that allows the data to be automatically exported to SPSS. Thus, no pretesting of the Deployment Questionnaire was possible. Distribution of deployment questionnaires will be undertaken by DRDC-Toronto.

Throughout the contract, assistance was provided to PSTC staff on request. Such assistance consisted of providing instruction on the use of SPSS, so that PSTC staff could complete such tasks as merging files within SPSS, exporting data from SPSS to Excel, and conducting descriptive analyses using SPSS. On average, no more than one hour per month was spent assisting PSTC staff.

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Sommaire

Pour mener à terme les travaux visés par ce contrat, il fallait connaître deux logiciels spéciaux, Teleform et SPSS. Teleform a surtout été employé pour numériser les questionnaires remplis et obtenir une version informatique qui puisse être exportée vers le logiciel d'analyse des données SPSS.

La méthode de recrutement des répondants au Questionnaire d'adaptation au prédéploiement (PAQ) a été légèrement modifiée dans le cadre de ce contrat. Plutôt que d'organiser et de coordonner des sessions de réponses au questionnaire, l'assistant de recherche se rend désormais dans les cours du Centre de formation pour le soutien de la Paix (CFSP) et renseigne les étudiants sur l'étude et distribue des questionnaires aux étudiants intéressés. Durant leur participation, les répondants peuvent rejoindre l'assistant de recherche par courriel et poser des questions. Quand le questionnaire est rempli, ils le déposent dans une boîte verrouillée située au CFSP.

La base de données comprend à présent 441 répondants. Les données ont été épurées avant analyses et on peut prendre connaissance de celles-ci dans le rapport technique RDDC intitulé « Évaluation de la fiabilité des barèmes du sondage sur le prédéploiement des opérations de soutien de la Paix ».

La liste d'envoi des éventuels répondants au questionnaire, déterminés par les fiches de réponse PAQ, a été mise à jour. Elle est tenue à jour sous forme d'une base de données Access 2000. Le questionnaire sur le déploiement a été réalisé avec Teleform. Cependant, au terme de ce contrat, il faut dire qu'il y a encore des problèmes sur le formatage du questionnaire pour que les données soient exportées automatiquement dans SPSS. La distribution des questionnaires sur le déploiement sera entreprise par le RDDC- Toronto

Pendant tout ce contrat, nous avons apporté notre assistance au personnel du CFSP qui en faisait la demande. Le genre d'assistance apportée a consisté à donner des instructions sur l'utilisation du SPSS pour que le personnel du CFSP puisse effectuer des tâches comme la fusion de fichiers dans SPSS, l'exportation de SPSS vers Excel et la réalisation d'analyses descriptives dans SPSS. En moyenne, l'aide apporté au personnel du CFSP n'a pas dépassé une heure par mois

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Familiarization with Software

Ethnograph, Teleform, and SPSS are the specialized software programs that have been used in the process of data collection and analysis for this project. Ethnograph is a package used for analysing qualitative data and was not required for this phase of the research.

Teleform is used to create questionnaires that, when completed, can be faxed or scanned back into the program such that the data can be exported to a statistical analysis software package. Training on scanning, verifying, and exporting data from existing questionnaires was completed early in the contract. Familiarization with creating a new questionnaire in Teleform began near the end of the contract period.

SPSS was used for all data analyses conducted for this contract.

Recruiting and Questionnaire Administration

At the onset of the contract, the method of recruiting Deployment Adaptation Questionnaire respondents was to attend classes for the purposes of introducing the project to students and providing information about the time and location of questionnaire administration sessions. Questionnaire sessions were held approximately one evening per week. The intent was to have students complete questionnaires in a common room in the presence of the research assistant so that the assistant would be available to answer questions. However, several students each week would ask to take the questionnaire with them so that they might complete it in their room at their leisure. In addition, questions were rarely asked to the assistant in the course of completing questionnaires. A more efficient method for questionnaire administration that would be more convenient for students while maintaining accessibility of research assistants and confidentiality of responses was therefore devised.

The new recruitment method is as follows. The research assistant attends the in-clearance session of each course. At that time, the information contained within the information and consent forms is provided verbally and an opportunity for questions is allowed. Students who choose to participate pick up a questionnaire after the in-clearance session. They are given an email address for the research assistant so that she can be contacted if they have any questions while completing the questionnaire. Completed questionnaires are dropped into a locked box located in the PSTC common room. Under this system, students have the entire duration of the course to complete the questionnaire.

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Questionnaire Database

Questionnaires were scanned using Teleform software and exported to SPSS, updating the database to include 441 respondents. To ensure that the data were clean, every tenth questionnaire was manually checked in its entirety. In addition, frequencies were run on each numeric variable and results were checked for out-of-range entries.

Statistical Analyses

Data summaries and the results of reliability analyses and comparisons of group means conducted under this contract. Reliability analyses are available in the DRDC Toronto Technical Report TR 2002-190 titled, "Peace Support Operations Predeployment Survey: Reliability Analyses"

As described in the Technical Report, reliability analyses revealed that only three of 25 analysed scales required substantial modification. For all reliable scales, additional analyses compared the scores of novice peacekeepers to those of experienced peacekeepers, non-commissioned officers' scores were compared to those of officers, and junior ranking officers' scores were compared to those of senior ranking officers.

These analyses revealed that novice peacekeepers experienced fewer military stressors but reported being more concerned about their deployment than were experienced peacekeepers. Experienced peacekeepers expected to be able to cope more successfully on deployment than did novice peacekeepers

Non-commissioned officers had different attitudes about the treatment of augmentees than did commissioned officers. These two groups also differed in Personal Need for Structure and Need for Cognition, with non-commissioned officers scoring higher on the Personal Need for Structure scale, and commissioned officers scoring higher on the Need for Cognition scale.

Senior ranking respondents rated the Canadian Forces' attitudes toward them as being more favourable than did the junior ranking respondents. Those in the senior ranks also had higher Dispositional Optimism scores.

Mailing List

The mailing list of potential deployment questionnaire respondents from information on PAQ reply cards has been updated. It is maintained as an Access 2000 database.

Deployment Questionnaire

The deployment questionnaire was created using Teleform. However, as of the end of the contract, problems were still being experienced in formatting the questionnaire such that data can be automatically exported to SPSS. Distribution of deployment questionnaires will be undertaken by DRDC-Toronto.

Analyses of PSTC Data

Throughout the contract, assistance was provided to PSTC staff on request. Such assistance consisted of providing instruction on the use of SPSS, so that PSTC staff could complete such tasks as merging files within SPSS, exporting data from SPSS to Excel, and conducting descriptive analyses using SPSS. On average, no more than one hour per month was spent assisting PSTC staff.

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1. Thompson, M. M. & Smith, L.S. (2002). Peace Support Operations Predeployment Survey: Scale Reliability Analyses DRDC Technical Report TR 2002-190. Toronto, Canada.

List of symbols/abbreviations/acronyms/initialisms

DND	Department of National Defence
PSTC	Peacekeeping Support Training Centre
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

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14 ABSTRACT

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(U) predeployment adaptation questionnaire; peace keeping support training centre; respondent recruitment; research assistance